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Foreign Relations, 1969-1976, Volume E-7, South Asia, 1969-1972

Released by the Office of the Historian

November 29, 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Henry A. Kissinger

SUBJECT: Turkish Tank Sale to Pakistan

Since you have an ongoing interest in military shipments to Pakistan, I wanted to bring you up to date on a recent development.

The new government in Turkey has unexpectedly informed us that it is ready to complete the sale of 100 M-47 tanks to Pakistan if we can still replace those with M-48s through our military aid program. You may recall that this transaction has been hanging since late last year because of some technicalities in Turkish and US law governing the transfer of money and equipment provided under military assistance. This kind of third-country transaction is in line with our present military supply policy which you will be reviewing in the NSC on December 10.

The latest Turkish proposal meets our legal requirements and the tanks are available for shipment within 3-6 months, but the following problems remain to be resolved if we want the sale to go through:

1. Funds would have, to be drawn from other military aid programs. The net cost to us would be about \$3. 7 million, up about a million dollars since this proposal was initiated about a year ago. We have told the Turks that this would not come out of their military aid ceiling.
2. We have to find out whether the Pakistanis still want to go through with the sale. We have heard nothing from them on this in recent months and suspect that they may at this point prefer to hold off until after we finish our review of our South Asian arms policy.

There are two options :

1. Wait until after the NSC discussion of South Asian arms supply policy on December 10. The argument for doing so is that this decision could then be placed in the context of whatever decisions you make at that meeting.
2. Tell the bureaucracy to go ahead with this sale, since it can be done without further delay within present policy.

RECOMMENDATION:

Since you have already made yourself abundantly clear on this, issue, I recommend that we move ahead now without further delays in an already drawn out exercise.

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